

Third and final Fort DuPont master plan meeting on the complex's future set for April 18 in Delaware City

DELAWARE CITY (April 11, 2013) – The last of three community meetings on the future of the Historic Fort DuPont Complex will be held at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 18, at the Delaware City Community Center, located at 250 Fifth Street (5th & Bayard).

After dozens of stakeholder interviews, two prior community meetings that attracted more than 120 people each, and extensive market research and analysis, the project team will present details of its recommendations to the public. The work also included a building-by-building condition survey and in-depth topographical studies.

After the presentation, participants may ask questions of project experts on historic preservation, planning, design and financial analysis.

The project team is led by Sasaki Associates of Watertown, Mass., a planning and design firm that has worked on many similar projects, including former military sites.

Fort DuPont, named after Rear Admiral Samuel Francis DuPont, originated during the Civil War. Along with Fort Delaware and Fort Mott, New Jersey, the fort successfully defended this strategic point along the Delaware River from naval attack through 1921. Of the three, Fort DuPont was the main defense site during World War I. The fort housed prisoners of war from Germany's Afrika Corps during World War II, and was decommissioned after the war ended. Governor Bacon Health Center opened on the site in 1947.

The site contains six Endicott Era (1885-1905) gun batteries, named for President Grover Cleveland's Secretary of War, William C. Endicott. DNREC maintains a boat launch into the Branch Canal adjoining Delaware City, and historic groups have adopted some of the buildings for renovation. Trails within the park are frequented by birdwatchers.

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